

CITY OF BELLEVUE
BELLEVUE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
MINUTES

March 9, 2017
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chair Zahn, Commissioners Bishop, Chirls, Lampe, Larrivee, Woosley, Wu

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Kevin McDonald, Marina Arakelyan, Rick Logwood, Kristi Oosterveen, Mike Ingram, Department of Transportation; Justin Matthews, KPFF Consulting Engineers; Meagan Powers, Concord Engineering

OTHERS PRESENT: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m. by Chair Zahn who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Bishop who arrived at 6:35 p.m.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Richard Morris, 13430 SE 24th Street, spoke as president of the Sunset Community Association. He said the extension of 140th Avenue SE to 145th Avenue SE down to Bellevue College has made a big difference. Now with sidewalks, people are no longer walking in the middle of the street. Kamber Road has sidewalks primarily on the west side but not on the east side. One disabled resident of the Sunset community has asked to have a sidewalk constructed on the east side of Kamber Road to avoid having to cross the street in his wheelchair to go anywhere. He said contact was made with the city and staff came out to look at the sidewalk situation. Currently there are women with kids in strollers using the bike path. What is needed a sidewalk from the QFC area past the stairs that go up to the college, possibly all the way down to the Sunset mini park connector.

Mr. Mark Brinton, 13630 SE 20th Street, also addressed the need for sidewalks along Kamber Road. He said he often sees people, including women with strollers, walking in the street where there is a lot of traffic that is not always following the speed limit. The situation is dangerous and a sidewalk would make things much safer.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Commissioner Woosley. The motion was

seconded by Commissioner Lampe and the motion carried unanimously.

5. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY COUNCIL, COMMUNITY COUNCIL, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS – None

6. DRAFT MINUTES REVIEW/APPROVAL

A. February 9, 2017

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Commissioner Woosley. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Chirls.

Commissioner Bishop called attention to the fourth paragraph on page 7 and noted that in the penultimate sentence “get off the freeway” should read “get on the freeway.”

With regard to the fifth paragraph on the same page, Commissioner Bishop suggested that the end of the last sentence should be changed to read “..all the way back to SE 37th Street.” Commissioner Woosley stated that while traffic does back up to and beyond SE 37th Street, the statement in the minutes accurately reflects what he said at the meeting.

Commissioner Bishop noted that “land” should be changed to “lane” in the last sentence of the fourth paragraph on page 9.

Commissioner Lampe called attention to the third paragraph on page 10 and asked if the statement “even with the expansion to 1500 stalls, the demand for the South Bellevue park and ride facility will be three or four times greater than the actual number of stalls” is in fact correct. Senior Planner Kevin McDonald said he would seek to confirm the statement with Meagan Powers of Concord Engineering to whom the statement is credited in the minutes.

A motion to approve the minutes as amended, including correcting the statement made by Ms. Powers if needed, was made by Commissioner Woosley. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lampe and the motion carried unanimously.

7. STUDY SESSION

A. Bellevue Way SE HOV Lane – 112th Avenue SE “Y” to I-90

Project Manager Marina Arakelyan reminded the Commissioners that the project is part of the approved 2017-2023 CIP. The project scope includes developing a design and completing all environmental documentation. As described in the CIP, the HOV project is intended to reduce traffic congestion in the evening peak period for transit, carpool and vanpool users, and to improve multimodal access. Two roadway sections have been considered, one narrow and one wide, with the only real difference being the width of the planter. There are tradeoffs associated with each option.

After deliberating the options against a list of criteria, the staff recommendation is for the narrow roadway section. Ms. Arakelyan noted that both the narrow and wide options perform in the same way. The narrow section has fewer impacts and the wide section more impacts to private properties. Additionally, at \$9 million less, the narrow section meets all of the project objectives.

Commissioner Bishop asked what the maximum height of the wall is for the narrow and wide options. Justin Matthews with KPFF Consulting Engineers explained that the narrow section has a 20-foot wall height, whereas the wide section has a 25-foot wall height at the highest point. The bulk of the \$9 million cost differential is in land acquisition and the wall cost.

Commissioner Chirls asked if there is any downside to the narrow section over the wide section. Ms. Arakelyan said the wide section allows for the provision of intermittent shoulders and wider areas for larger trees that would better screen the wall. There are, however, other ways to screen the wall. Additionally, the wide section would allow for more bioretention swales, but there are ways to mitigate the water runoff in the narrow section as well.

Commissioner Woosley asked if it would be possible to have one or two pullouts carved out in what is a fairly long stretch of roadway to facilitate vehicles pulling over if necessary. Ms. Arakelyan said the option could be investigated. She noted that there are some sections, particularly on the curve, where it will be necessary to widen more than five feet in order to accommodate the required site distances. It may be possible to provide a bit of a shoulder in that location. Those issues will be refined in moving the project beyond the conceptual level.

With regard to project length, Ms. Arakelyan said four options were considered: 1) extend the HOV lane to the “Y”; 2) extend the HOV lane past the “Y” along both 112th Avenue SE and Bellevue Way; 3) add a general purpose lane along with the HOV lane; and 4) extend the HOV lane along 112th Avenue SE. All four options were run against the 2030 no-build baseline. The Commissioners were shown a chart comparing the travel time savings for each option compared against the no-build option. It was noted that Option 3, which adds a general purpose lane, would actually increase travel times. Given the project objective to improve service connection reliability for transit, carpool and vanpool, Option 4 yields the best performance.

Mr. Matthews pointed out that Option 1 and Option 4 are not all that different. What Option 4 does is offer a relatively low cost change compared to widening Bellevue Way. Option 4 yields additional travel time benefits to get users through 112th Avenue SE quicker. Option 1 yields travel time savings for all modes, but that is because the “Y” intersection itself actually serves as a chokepoint that effectively meters traffic. Option 4 gets more people through the “Y” intersection but triggers an increase in SOV travel time delay.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Wu, Mr. Matthews said closer to I-90 there are a limited number of lanes. If a third southbound general purpose lane were added, it would have to ultimately merge back into the southbound lanes leading to I-90. Unless the WSDOT interchange and Sound Transit plans were modified to add another lane accessing the freeway, the three lanes must go to two right at the park and ride site, and the model shows that will make things fall apart as additional capacity reaches the chokepoint.

Commissioner Wu asked how options 2 and 4 compare and Mr. Matthews explained that Option 2 takes the HOV lane up to 108th Avenue NE and Option 4 leaves the lane on 112th Avenue SE only. The two options performed quite similarly in the model, but one of the reasons staff has recommended Option 4 is the high price tag associated with widening the short Bellevue Way segment up to 108th Avenue SE that would not result in a measurable change in performance.

Commissioner Woosley said he was holding out hope that the city would go forward with widening the one-block section of Bellevue Way between 108th Avenue SE and 112th Avenue SE using congestion relieve levy dollars. He said there is a broader purpose and more

objectives to the study than just trying to improve transit speed and reliability. It is certainly clear that the biggest beneficiaries will be the vehicles in the HOV lane. He asked if the transit travel times include stopping at transit stops and the park and ride. Ms. Arakelyan noted that Bellevue Way has high volumes and because of that more green signal time is provided. As a result, traffic on 112th Avenue SE has reduced opportunities for getting onto Bellevue Way, and that creates a backup. By providing an HOV lane on 112th Avenue SE, transit is afforded more opportunity to access Bellevue Way.

Commissioner Woosley observed that a signal will be located at the South Bellevue park and ride. He said the signal will have a metering effect and asked how it will affect the overall throughput of Bellevue Way South. Ms. Arakelyan pointed out that the signal will be in place even under the no-build option, taking away more green time for Bellevue Way to facilitate the additional vehicles using the park and ride. The modeling indicates the signal will reduce the throughput by about six percent.

Commissioner Woosley asked if the model included the 24/7 HOV lane westbound on I-90 as part of the R8A project. Ms. Arakelyan said the modeling done for Bellevue Way stopped at the meters and did not include I-90. Commissioner Woosley noted that for the first time during the evening peak period there will be an additional lane on I-90 westbound that will be operated as an HOV lane. He said his instinct was that the lane would help flush out Bellevue Way South and 112th Avenue SE. Mr. Matthews said as modeled, the HOV lane on I-90 is assumed operational and free flowing. Of course, if the I-90 HOV lane backs up onto Bellevue Way, the modeling numbers will not hold.

Commissioner Bishop said he could not understand the increase in transit travel time of more than four minutes between the 2015 existing conditions and the 2030 no-build baseline, particularly in light of the fact that on Bellevue Way the increase is only just one minute. He said it appeared to him to be question of signal timing. Ms. Arakelyan said the model assumes optimization of the signal. Mr. Matthews added that the signal sequence favors the higher volumes on Bellevue Way, so what the model shows is people on 112th Avenue SE will struggle to get through the intersection and onto Bellevue Way. Commissioner Bishop said a fundamental problem is that there is half again as much volume on Bellevue Way as on 112th Avenue SE.

Commissioner Bishop suggested the increased travel times reflected in Option 3 are in recognition of the fact that the third lane from the park and ride to the “Y” will be nothing more than a large parking lot with vehicles that will add to the delay. Philosophically, Bellevue Way is an oversaturated arterial which the project is trying to tweak in some way. The 2030 baseline involves 15 year’s worth of growth, a second signal at the park and ride lot, and an extra thousand vehicles coming out of the park and ride lot. Those three facts conspire to make Bellevue Way not work very well. Sound Transit has agreed to build a single lane from the park and ride to the freeway on-ramp, which clearly will not be enough mitigation to address the impact on the arterial.

Ms. Arakelyan said the conceptual cost of about \$31 million for Option 4 was developed by staff. She stressed that the number is preliminary based on the conceptual design. Pricing options were also determined relative to phasing in the project over time, with Option 4A taking the HOV lane only 320 feet, and Option 4B taking the HOV lane 1700 feet to the Winters House. She noted that the recommendation of staff was to go with Option 4B given that it would yield the most benefit in terms of travel time savings and would cut the full Option 4 price tag by \$9 million.

Commissioner Larrivee asked if phasing would increase the overall cost of the project. Ms. Arakelyan said that is typically the case. Of course much would depend on how far out the phases are programmed. If the full \$31 million project cost can be found, the full project will be built. Commissioner Larrivee allowed that the \$9 million in savings from going with Option 4B could be earmarked for other projects. Ideally, the net benefit based on travel time savings would be known for other projects in order to adequately make comparisons. Option 4D certainly would cost less in the short term but could ultimately cost more. Ms. Arakelyan agreed but clarified that the focus is on defining the scope of the project so the details, including cost, can be refined.

Commissioner Wu asked of the travel time comparisons for Option 4 and Option 4B. Meagan Powers with Concord Engineering said the difference between Option 4 and Option 4B comes down to the metering effect of the “Y” intersection of 112th Avenue SE and Bellevue Way. Opening the pipe all the way through the intersection would allow for pushing more people into the corridor to the south of the “Y”, but that would result in queues forming more quickly between the “Y” and the park and ride. The more people moving through the signal during each cycle, the faster the queues build up on the south side of the cycle given the limited number of vehicles that can be processed through the signalized intersections at the park and ride access points. By not widening all the way through the “Y”, the signal itself will act as a meter point and the queues will not build as fast, resulting in somewhat smoother traffic operations south of the “Y”.

Commissioner Woosley observed that if four lanes will go to three lanes and then two lanes, the southern segment will have a smoother flow but only because the intersection is metered and the delay will occur further upstream. Increased capacity attracts traffic flow, but the more capacity there is in the overall system, the better the system as a whole will function. The system benefits should be considered as part of the evaluation. Ms. Arakelyan pointed out that in the CIP the project is defined as extending from the park and ride to the “Y”. Commissioner Woosley suggested an evaluation of the full length of the project would have greater benefits to the overall system than Option 4B. One approach would be to recommend doing the engineering work on Option 4B and to phase construction of the project.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Bishop about the difference between Options 4A and 4B, Ms. Powers said Option 4A provides the benefit of getting vehicles through the park and ride intersection. The buses that try to access the park and ride do not have an additional lane to travel in from the bus zones north into the facility and as such are moving with the general purpose traffic. They see some benefit from having traffic flowing better than the future baseline conditions, but they do not get nearly as much benefit as Option 4B offers.

Commissioner Wu asked how the 320-foot number in Option 4A came about. Mr. Matthews said it was largely determined by the cost, how long of an HOV lane could we construct for \$5 million. Even at 320 feet, there is still a need for walls to accommodate the ultimate project.

Commissioner Chirls agreed with the suggestion of Commissioner Larrivee to develop project metrics that will help compare benefits. Combining volumes data with percentage improvement data and adding in assumptions about numbers of people in SOVs, HOVs and so on could yield a measure indicating benefit that is more rational and less subjective, and certainly less political. It should be possible just using the traffic volumes numbers and transit time savings data to construct some metric of benefit. Chair Zahn pointed out that Attachment 1 in the packet included some dollar comparisons among the various options.

Commissioner Lampe commented that given the estimated \$1.4 million in annual savings related to reduced travel times, the \$23 million project would pay out in about 15 years. Using the same data to compare the project against other traffic relief projects would be a very good approach.

Commissioner Chirls said if he were investing the money himself the choice would be easy. Option 4A has annual travel time savings of \$517,000 for an investment of \$5 million, which is quite a bit better than the \$1.38 million in travel time savings for an investment of \$23 million under Option 4B. The Commission should get into the practice of doing a similar exercise for all projects.

Commissioner Woosley suggested the rate of return could be even higher given the additional travel time savings on the northern segment of Bellevue Way South and 112th Avenue SE associated with the larger project. The choice before the Commission is how much engineering should be done. The cost differential for engineering the three phases is not that much. He suggested engineering the entire project and reserving for later the discussion of how the phasing should work, if the phasing is done at all.

Commissioner Larrivee agreed. He said if the intent is to do the full project at some point, it would make sense to do all of the engineering up front. Ms. Arakelyan pointed out that the environmental documentation and preliminary design would be done for the entire project. The phasing approach is one option but is not something that is locked in.

Commissioner Bishop asked if the model assumed any changes to the current I-90 ramp meter operations at the south end. Ms. Powers said the ramp metering included in the model was variable ranging from eight seconds to 28 seconds per vehicle at the meter, and that was based on observed WSDOT meter rates, and that was assumed to continue into the future.

Commissioner Bishop said the fact is under existing conditions Bellevue Way South has two over-saturated arterial lanes that merge into three lanes when it gets to the freeway. One of the three lanes connects to eastbound I-90 and it has the highest volumes of all the ramps during the evening peak period with 1430 vehicles per hour. The number of vehicles per hour in the evening peak period that access I-90 headed westbound is 1070. They have the choice of taking the HOV lane, which sees about 80 vehicles per hour according to WSDOT, or the general purpose lane, which is subject to the ramp meter. It is the ramp meter that is causing backed-up congestion on Bellevue Way South all the way to the “Y” and beyond. Much of the problem can be directly tied to the grossly inappropriately allocated facility of a dedicated HOV lane that is carrying only 80 vehicles per hour, including all the buses. The park and ride currently has 500 stalls, and during the evening peak period when all the vehicles are leaving that facility, only 80 vehicles are using the westbound HOV lane onto I-90. By comparison, the general purpose lanes see 990 vehicles per hour. The regional facility is directly impacting a local roadway, and Bellevue must construct a \$30 million project to address that impact. R8A, with the extra lane going across Mercer Island and into Seattle, is going to result in a queue showing up on Mercer Island at the merge point at Island Crest Way, and the Bellevue Way South on-ramp to westbound I-90 will be timed on the basis of a queue that is four miles down the road. That will be relieved by R8A and the effect will be positive on the Bellevue Way South I-90 ramp meter. The Commission should be very concerned about spending \$23 million or \$30 million on a local arterial that is only a problem because of an inappropriately operated regional system.

Commissioner Wu said she was still struggling to understand the network impacts. She said she appreciated the comments made by Commissioner Bishop but allowed that they were in regard to an issue that is outside the scope of the model. The Bellevue Way South proposal is a significant project and the trend of regional facilities should be more clearly understood in order to give the assumptions a more solid footing. She said it was clear to her that the project is still in the conceptual engineering stage.

Commissioner Chirls pointed out that going from the \$5 million option to the \$23 million option will require spending 4.6 times more money for only 2.58 times the percentage benefit according to the numbers presented by staff. That suggests diminishing returns on whatever Bellevue would do with the project. He agreed that may be due to the fact that the city does not have total control over all of the factors that are impacting Bellevue Way South. He said if it were his money, he would not do the project given the numbers.

Chair Zahn said she shared many of the concerns voiced. She said it is clear there are variables that are not yet completely understood and said she could not see the Commission reaching consensus with regard to what approach to take. She asked if there is an urgency to move the project along to 60 percent design. Ms. Arakelyan said the project was adopted by the Council in December 2015 and staff began its work in January 2016. The public involvement process kicked off in March 2016. The project as presented to the Commission represents more than a year's work. Staff has done what they have been asked to do and are hoping to go to Council to present what has been done.

Chair Zahn noted that the Commission previously expressed concerns about the low level of public input. Effort should be put into broadening the outreach to all those concerned with the corridor.

Commissioner Larrivee suggested the Commission was being unfair to the staff. He pointed out that the staff were told the project should be engineered. The Commission has voiced serious questions about the value of the project given the numbers, but that is a discussion for further down the road. Given that the staff has been directed by the Council to scope out and engineer the project, the Commission should recommend to the Council that the full project be engineered. The value of the project to begin with should, however, be held up as a caveat.

Commissioner Woosley agreed that the Commission should recommend proceeding with design engineering and reserve any decision on phasing for later. The Commission should also hold in reserve the operational characteristics of the new lane until there is a better understanding of how things will work with the R8A HOVs on all of I-90. It could turn out that by changing the signal timing on the ramp to westbound I-90, the scope of the Bellevue Way South project could change dramatically.

Ms. Arakelyan pointed out that the design of the project is currently at five percent, and what the staff was seeking was authorization to move to 60 percent and start working on the environmental documents.

Commissioner Bishop said given that information, he was not opposed to moving ahead with the design work. He further suggested the Commission should recommend the narrow option over the wide option.

Chair Zahn clarified that in recommending the design work go forward, the Commission should be specific about what option should be advanced to 60 percent. She noted that

Commissioner Woosley favored designing the entire length but that Commissioner Chirls favored only Option 4A.

Commissioner Chirls said he supported Option 4A given the cost/benefit calculation and because of his concerns about the implications of other things that will go on outside the control of the city. The prudent approach would be to recommend the least commitment, holding off until later other decisions given that other factors are likely to impact the project.

Commissioner Wu said the light rail project will hopefully be a huge success for the city. It is important to keep in mind the role of the overall project beyond just the Bellevue Way South segment. She said she was not ready to recommend moving the project to the 60 percent design stage given the need to sort out the various assumptions.

Commissioner Woosley agreed the Commission could benefit from having more information, particularly cost/benefit information about the broader system, the operation of I-90 with the new HOV lanes and any signal changes WSDOT might impose. There is also a need to better understand what the cost differences would be to construct the project in phases rather than all at once. If operated as an HOV lane, the proposal is essentially a transit project and may not be entirely Bellevue's responsibility; one could argue it should be a Sound Transit mitigation project tied to the park and ride expansion and signal authorization. In other jurisdictions along I-405, WSDOT is funding some arterial capacity improvements to improve access to the freeway.

Chair Zahn allowed that an additional study session would be required. She asked staff to come back with additional information regarding network impacts, and more information regarding the issue of return on investment.

Commissioner Larrivee suggested seeking from the Council better guidance with regard to what they want the Commission to do. He said if he were in staff's shoes he would not know where to go next given the fact that some of the Commission's questions were focused on whether or not the project should be done at all.

Chair Zahn said she would schedule a conversation with Councilmember Wallace.

B. Right of Way Use Permits

Mr. McDonald pointed out that the item was not time sensitive and suggested it could be postponed to a future meeting.

A motion to amend the agenda by postponing item 7B was made by Commissioner Larrivee. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wu and the motion carried unanimously.

C. Transportation Improvement Program

Capital Facilities Planning and Programming Administrator Kristi Oosterveen explained that the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a unconstrained six-year transportation plan that is updated annually. Included in the TIP are projects from the 12-year Transportation Facilities Plan (TFP), the seven-year Capital Investment Program (CIP) plan, recommended projects from other plans or alternative analysis and other regional projects the city might want to be involved in should money be available. Once the TIP is completed and approved by the Council, it is sent to the Puget Sound Regional Council and WSDOT for inclusion into the

regional TIP and the state's TIP.

Ms. Oosterveen explained that the TIP is divided into four sections: 1), projects from the 2017-2023 CIP; 2) projects from the 2016-2027 TFP; 3) other projects identified through alternative analysis or other planning and pre-design studies; and 4) regional or outside agency-led projects the city might want to participate in. The proposal is to add five additional projects, four of which are new to the CIP, and one regional outside agency-led project that results from the city's partnership with King County regarding the Eastside Rail Corridor. Four projects are proposed to be deleted, three CIP projects that are projected to be substantially complete in 2017, and one unfunded local project that is not part of the comprehensive transportation project list approved by the Commission and the Council in 2016. The proposal also includes transferring six projects within sections of the TIP, three in Section 1 that are proposed to be moved into Section 2, and three projects or portions of projects in Section 2 that are proposed to be transferred into Section 1.

Ms. Oosterveen commented that the newly approved Proposition 2 levy will yield funds for neighborhood safety, connectivity and congestion projects. Several projects will either be built in conjunction or in partnership with other ongoing programs. She said the Commission could choose to revise the description of the various programs to indicate their association with levy funds, or could choose to include the CIP levy projects as separate line items. The projects currently awaiting the TIFIA loan authorization were noted in the comments of the draft document.

Commissioner Wu recommended adding language to the program descriptions to indicate the use of levy funds. Ms. Oosterveen said the staff were still going through the process of determining exactly what the projects will be for the next two years. She said listing all of them would substantially increase the list. Simply including language would be sufficient. The two specific CIP projects that have been set up with levy funds could be listed as new, but there would not be any project information to go along with them other than a general description of the levy project.

Commissioner Woosley said it was his understanding that going forward the levy funds were going to be kept distinct from the general funds. One way to do that would be to insert an additional column for levy funds for capital projects. However it is done, accounting for the levy funds needs to be accounted for moving forward. Ms. Oosterveen said adding a column for levy funds would be problematic given that the Puget Sound Regional Council specifically dictates the template to be used. The levy funds will be carefully designated and tracked.

There was consensus to add the two CIP projects tied to levy funding.

Commissioner Bishop called attention the project 15, Spring Boulevard Zone 1 and noted that only \$9.4 million was shown for the total cost. He said it was his understanding the city already has a contract out for the project at \$12.5 million.

Commissioner Bishop noted that project 22, the Bellevue Way HOV lane, should have its total cost bumped up to \$23 million. Ms. Oosterveen explained that since the TIP funding runs from 2018-2023, funds from 2017 or before are not shown. She added, however, that staff agreed the project totals should be indicated, which is allowed.

Commissioner Bishop asked where the two new projects between number 28 and number 29 came from. Ms. Oosterveen said they are both Neighborhood Sidewalk Program projects. She

noted that in February 2016 the Commission directed staff to look at the next three Neighborhood Sidewalk Program projects on the priority list and find a way to spend the funds to build them. Three projects were evaluated as directed, of which the new projects shown are the first two. The total project costs are within the funds available in the Neighborhood Sidewalk Program, and they include some levy money.

With regard to the new project West Lake Sammamish Parkway Phase 3, Commissioner Bishop noted that there was \$1 million for it in the current CIP. Ms. Oosterveen said the intent is to add another \$7 million to the unsecured funding for a total of \$8 million.

Commissioner Bishop referenced project 33, the sidewalk on SE 16th Street between 148th Avenue SE and 154th Avenue SE, and asked if everyone agreed the project should be kept on the list. The project was funded years ago and the neighborhood came forward asking that the project not be done. Ms. Oosterveen said the project is on the TIP list because the project is on the current TFP. Removal of the project could be recommended next time the TFP is updated.

Commissioner Bishop questioned the description of project 47, Bellevue Way at NE 2nd Street, noting that southbound to eastbound would be a left turn, not a right turn. Ms. Oosterveen said she would correct that typo.

Ms. Oosterveen explained that at the time the TIP project list was mailed out to the Commission, project 54, the Eastgate project, had not been discussed with the Council. She said she would be making the necessary adjustments to the project description.

Commissioner Bishop asked why project 81, the subsurface arterial, should not be retained on the TIP. Mr. McDonald said it is included in the narrative of the downtown subarea plan as a project idea, and that is what will keep the project alive. However, the Commission made the recommendation, and the Council agreed, that in the comprehensive transportation project list, the project would not survive. If the project becomes more clarified and solidified, it can be moved to the TIP. Commissioner Bishop pointed out that the project is perfect for something like a TIFIA loan or other federal funding, and if it is not on the list, it will not be eligible. He said he saw no problem with keeping the project on the list.

Commissioner Lampe suggested raising with Councilmember Wallace the notion of retaining the project on the list or removing it.

Commissioner Bishop asked whether or not the TIP should continue to carry the \$50 million for project 87, East Link light rail transit. Ms. Oosterveen said the city has met some of its obligation, notably the projects in the associated CIP. She said the total dollar amount can be shown at any level.

Commissioner Wu asked if bike facilities are planned for projects 15 and 16, NE Spring Boulevard Zones 1 and 2. Ms. Oosterveen the project descriptions for both are the ones that were adopted in the recently 2017-2023 CIP. Project descriptions from adopted documents are not generally changed in order to maintain consistency.

Commissioner Wu asked if the Grand Connection project should be included in the TIP. Mr. McDonald said the project is currently going through the conceptual design process. It has its own CIP funding source through the Department of Planning and Community Development, not through the Department of Transportation. She said if it would helpful to show the project on the TIP, it should be included. Mr. McDonald said because it is covered elsewhere, it did

not need to be shown as part of the TIP.

With regard to project 31, Eastside Rail Corridor, Commissioner Wu proposed changing the word “overcrossing” in the description to “crossing” as a way of leaving the form of crossing flexible. Ms. Oosterveen said she would make that note but indicated the project description as shown matches the one in the adopted CIP.

Commissioner Woosley said it was his understanding that the project is already moving forward with a grade-separated crossing structure and is being designed in conjunction with the light rail station.

A motion to approve the CIP project list as amended and to set April 13 as the public hearing date was made by Commissioner Bishop. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lampe and the motion carried unanimously.

A motion to extend the meeting until 9:20 p.m. was made by Commissioner Wu. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bishop and the motion carried unanimously.

D. Transportation Management Program Review

Senior Transportation Planner Michael Ingram reminded the Commission that a fair amount of time was spent in 2016 working through the current Transportation Management Program (TMP) requirements and coming up with recommendations for updating them. He said the Council was briefed on the recommendations in September 2016 and direction was given to proceed with working out the details of the code refinements and administrative guidance.

Mr. Ingram said a key element of the update involves clarifying the performance expectations of buildings, and when discussed at the Commission meeting in November 2016 it was agreed a primary expectation involves the concept of making a “good faith effort” to reduce the overall number of vehicle trips. In the event there are questions or issues of non-cooperation, follow-up and enforcement may be required. The Commission was briefed about the approach used at Commute Trip Reduction worksites and how it could apply in the TMP context. What remains to be done is establishing appropriate performance targets applicable to office buildings, not just in the downtown but citywide, and identifying the implementation activities expected at buildings. The recommendation made was to move away from the prescriptive approach in the current code to a more flexible approach. The revisions will ultimately be captured both in city code and in the administrative guidelines.

Mr. Ingram proposed involving a stakeholder group comprised of city staff members, representatives of the Bellevue Downtown Association, King County Metro, and building management and parking representatives. He said he had already been in contact with several who are interested in participating.

Commissioner Bishop asked if some of the representatives would be from outside of the downtown. Mr. Ingram said the folks identified to date are all associated with the downtown. He said he will broaden the invitation to bring in a broader representation.

Commissioner Wu asked if participation would be limited to people from Bellevue. Mr. Ingram said some he has spoken with have experience working with buildings in downtown Bellevue as well as in Seattle and Redmond. On the King County Metro side, the staff who oversees the monitoring work in Bellevue does the same for Kirkland.

Mr. Ingram allowed that the schedule included in the memo was somewhat optimistic but said he hoped to make it work. He noted the schedule called for addressing the topic on April 13 and May 11, and holding a public hearing on June 8.

Commissioner Wu commented that the amount of literature on the topic is limited and suggested the setting performance targets appropriately could be a difficult task. Mr. Ingram said the Comprehensive Plan targets that look out to 2035 establish the long-range plan for what the city is looking to accomplish. The Commute Trip Reduction sites offer examples of what can be accomplished and could serve as useful reference points.

Commissioner Wu urged the need to keep an open mind in talking with stakeholders.

Commissioner Woosley indicated his support for moving forward with the proposed approach.

Commissioner Larrivee agreed with the suggestion to reach out to businesses outside the downtown core and suggested also looking outside of Bellevue. He said the University of Washington may have information of value to share.

Commissioner Bishop cautioned against seeking input from the University of Washington given that what they face is far different from anything in Bellevue.

E. Downtown Subarea Plan Policy Recommendation

Mr. McDonald reported that earlier in the day he and Commissioner Lampe had had a discussion about the recommended language of S-DT-39.1. He said they both agreed that the language as proposed in the memo is worded somewhat awkwardly. He said Commissioner Lampe had proposed revising the policy to read “Blend engineering standards, traffic operations techniques and urban design components on downtown streets to enhance mobility and foster livability.”

Mr. McDonald said the recommended language of S-DT-39 and S-DT-39.1 flowed from previous conversations with the Commission.

Commissioner Bishop asked what new thing the language of S-DT-39 brings in that is not already embedded elsewhere. Mr. McDonald allowed that the concept is embedded in the Complete Streets work and in the Vision Zero work. He said the policy language was drafted to capture the conversation that occurred at the last Commission meeting around the recognition that streets provide for mobility and that they need to be safe and attractive in order to contribute to livability.

Commissioner Bishop agreed that the original language of S-DT-39 referring to a hierarchy of streets was not needed given that S-DT-41 sets forth the hierarchy.

Chair Zahn said she could support eliminating S-DT-39.

Commissioner Woosley proposed retaining S-DT-39 and incorporating the revised language of S-DT-39.1 into the introduction.

Commissioner Wu commented that S-DT-39 and S-DT-39.1 are similar but different in that S-DT-39 provides overall direction, whereas S-DT-39.1 provides specifics. The aspects need to

be balanced.

Chair Zahn pointed out that language of S-DT-39 is not confined just to downtown streets; it is a foundational policy for all streets in the city.

There was consensus to eliminate the old language for S-DT-39 and move S-DT-39.1 as revised by Commissioner Lampe into the narrative.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Bishop, Mr. McDonald said S-DT-81 will ultimately be moved to the pedestrian section.

A motion to extend the meeting by 15 minutes to 9:35 p.m. was made by Commissioner Woosley. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bishop and the motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Bishop called attention to S-DT-138.4 and suggested the word “nearby” could be deleted. Mr. McDonald agreed. Mr. McDonald also agreed to the suggestion made by Commissioner Bishop to delete the comma in S-DT-143.

Commissioner Bishop asked about the “high-opportunity locations that meet engineering standards for traffic safety” mentioned in S-DT-157.1. Mr. McDonald said the locations for new on-street parking are shown on the map. There are only a few of them and most of them have already been converted to parking.

Commissioner Bishop referred to S-DT-157.6 and asked if taxi stands should be expanded to include uses such as Uber and Lyft. Mr. McDonald said those services tend to go where people are rather than to queue up and wait for riders. The pick-up and drop-off zones that are recommended can be used by Uber and Lyft.

Commissioner Larrivee suggested the word “taxi” can be narrowly construed and suggested using “for-hire vehicles” instead. There was consensus to make the change.

Commissioner Bishop referred to S-DT-159 and proposed adding “for pedestrians” to the end. Mr. McDonald said the types of intersections are defined in the Downtown Transportation Plan. He proposed adding “as defined in the Downtown Transportation Plan.” There was agreement to make that change.

Commissioner Bishop noted that S-DT-163 included a reference to “people of all ages and abilities.” He suggested seeking to accommodate people of all ages and abilities in the downtown area would be in direct conflict with Vision Zero. Mr. McDonald countered that facilities built to be safe, comfortable and connected to the places people want to go would be amenities to those living in the downtown.

Commissioner Chirls suggested the policy would only be in conflict with Vision Zero if such facilities were not constructed to be safe and comfortable. He pointed out that the bicycle facilities standards are built on the 8 to 80 philosophy, which speaks to the ages of people who could potentially ride a bicycle. If facilities cannot be made safe for the eight year old and the 80 year old, they are not considered safe.

Chair Zahn pointed out that the Commission had in other areas revised policy language to be very inclusive and removed the references to people of all ages and abilities. Mr. McDonald

said that was the case in developing the language of the Transportation Element. The context was in regard to ensuring the provision of an equitable transportation system. He said the language of S-DT-163 is similar but not exactly the same because there are facilities that are very safe and comfortable for some types of riders that less experienced or timid riders would not choose to use. The policy calls for designating and enhancing bicycle routes through the downtown that would be comfortable for all users. That does not mean such facilities would be on all downtown streets, only on select corridors.

Commissioner Woosley commented that the policy language sets an expectation for every bicycle facility on the designated streets to be fully accommodating for all riders. It would take a significant physical separated bicycle facility in order to accommodate everyone safely. Commissioner Chirls said the policy should not be taken as a mandate, rather as an indication of intent. The city may never get there as a practical matter, but unless the intent is stated the city will certainly not get there.

Commissioner Larrivee noted that the downtown is seeing an increase in the number of residents. The intent of the policy is to provide for bicycle facilities that can be safely used by those residents and others who want to use them. Given that people of all ages and abilities have a right to use bicycle facilities anywhere in the city, the reference could be eliminated.

Commissioner Wu observed that the Complete Streets trend nationwide is intended to highlight vulnerable population groups, such as pedestrians. What the policy does is highlight one population, which is appropriate.

Commissioner Lampe asked if there was any alternative language that could be used to reference a standard for bicycling. Chair Zahn pointed out that the Pedestrian and Bicycle Implementation Initiative has language that talks about connected and protected. Mr. McDonald agreed and pointed out that with respect to standards, the multimodal LOS work the Commission is about to complete has standards for bicycle facilities that match facility design to the specific street environments. Bellevue Way, NE 8th Street and NE 4th Street are exempted in the downtown, so the focus is on lesser volume and lower speed streets where even minimal separation can yield a level of comfort that meets the intent of the policy.

A motion to extend the meeting by an additional ten minutes was made by Commissioner Larrivee. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Woosley and the motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Woosley called attention to S-DT-80 and the need for additional flexibility to reflect potential future locations for pedestrian bridges. There is one under construction between Bellevue Way and 105th Avenue NE, so that location needs to be added to the policy. The simple solution would be to reference NE 6th Street between Bellevue Way and 112th Avenue NE. The Grand Connection should also be identified as crossing 112th Avenue NE and 114th Avenue NE between NE 4th Street and NE 6th Street. Mr. McDonald acknowledged the Grand Connection and the bridge being built over the pedestrian corridor on NE 6th Street between Bellevue Way and 105th Avenue NE. However, nothing has been discussed about bridges between 105th Avenue NE and 110th Avenue NE.

Commissioner Bishop stressed the need to include the Grand Connection without dictating where it will go given that the design remains undetermined.

A motion to strike from S-DT-163 “all ages and abilities” was made by Commissioner Bishop.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Woosley and the motion failed with Commissioners Woosley, Lampe and Bishop voting for, and Chair Zahn and Commissioners Wu, Chirls and Larrivee voting against.

The motion made at the previous Commission meeting to approve the downtown subarea plan policies carried unanimously.

8. OLD BUSINESS

Commissioner Larrivee suggested staff should meet with the Sunset Community Association to talk about ways to introduce sidewalk ideas into the public process. Chair Zahn concurred.

9. NEW BUSINESS – None

10. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Chris Johnson with the Bellevue Chamber of Commerce, 3301 NE 12th Street, Suite 100, said it is no secret the Chamber has made the Bellevue Way South project one of its top public policy priorities over the last 15 years. Other than I-405, Bellevue Way South has been the Chamber's top objective. As to the merits of the proposals, however, the Chamber has yet to make a decision about which alternative makes the most sense. Additional data was requested of the project team, and the team was very responsive. One request made was to run the BKR model again assuming the medium level of transportation investment and screening for origin/destination of trips in the corridor, general purpose versus HOV modesplit, transit versus carpool, and local versus regional trips. Per the BKR model, all of the southbound trips along the Bellevue Way South corridor in the evening peak, 17 percent originate in and are destined for locations within the city. Forty percent originate within the city and are destined to Issaquah, Renton and beyond via I-405, and 42 percent originate within the city and are destined to Seattle and beyond via I-90. Similarly, when screened just for HOV trips, the results were similar. Of the forecasted HOV trips in the evening peak, 15 percent were from Bellevue and destined to locations within Bellevue; 36 percent were from Bellevue and destined to Issaquah, Renton and points east; and 49 percent were from Bellevue destined to Seattle and beyond via I-90 westbound. In considering costs and benefits, there are several quantitative tools that can be used, including existing MMA data, intersection delay data, V/C data, and the performance of individual facilities. The Commission should consider using a variety of tools and assigning the proper weight to each in making a recommendation to the Council. The Chamber does not believe the no-build alternative is credible in terms of meeting the growth targets and keeping the downtown economy vibrant, but the organization is not yet ready to declare allegiance to any of the alternatives that have been identified.

11. REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONER – None

12. STAFF REPORTS – None

13. COMMISSION CALENDAR

Mr. McDonald briefly reviewed the items on the Commission's calendar.

14. ADJOURN

Chair Zahn adjourned the meeting at 9:52 p.m.

Secretary to the Transportation Commission

Date

Chairperson of the Transportation Commission

Date